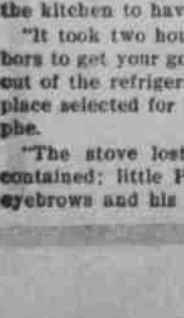
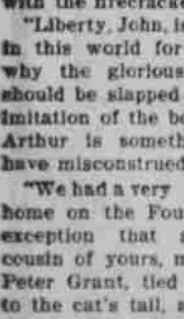
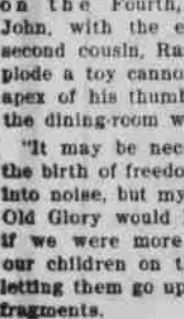
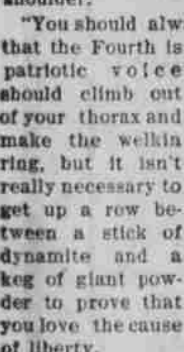
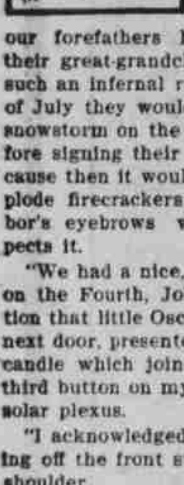


UNCLE PETER'S FOURTH

BY GEORGE V. HOBART.



UNCLE PETER passed the Fourth of July at his old home in Ohio. I must show you a letter he wrote me a few days after that noisy event:

"Dear John: We had a nice, quiet time on the Fourth, with the exception of my ankle, which was somewhat dislocated because my foot stepped on an infant bombshell, which same exploded for my benefit.

"I like the idea of the Fourth with the exception of the noise.

"I believe that if our forefathers had suspected that their great-grandchildren would make such an infernal racket on the Fourth of July they would have waited for a snowstorm on the 16th of January before signing their John Hancock, because then it would be too cold to explode firecrackers under your neighbor's eyebrows when he least expects it.

"We had a nice, quiet time at home on the Fourth, John, with the exception that little Oscar Maddy, who lives next door, presented me with a roman candle which joined me between the third button on my waist-coat and the solar plexus.

"I acknowledged the receipt by falling off the front step and barking my shoulder.

"You should always remember, John, that the Fourth is the day when your patriotic voice should climb out of your thorax and make the welkin ring, but it isn't really necessary to get up a row between a stick of dynamite and a keg of giant powder to prove that you love the cause of liberty.

"You will find that some of our best citizens—men who love liberty with an everlasting love—are hiding in the cellar with both hands over their ears from July 3d to July 5th.

"We had a nice, quiet time at home on the Fourth, John, with the exception that your second cousin, Randolph, tried to explode a toy cannon and removed the apex of his thumb and about half of the dining-room window.

"It may be necessary to celebrate the birth of freedom by bursting forth into noise, but my idea, John, is that Old Glory would like it much better if we were more subdued and kept our children on the earth instead of letting them go up in the air in small fragments.

"We had a very quiet time at home, John, with the exception of your distant relative, Uncle Joseph Carberry. Uncle Joe annexed about six mint juleps and then went to sleep on the front porch with five packs of firecrackers in his coat pocket.

"Full of the spirit of liberty, your interesting cousin, Randolph, set fire to your uncle's pocket, and when last seen your Uncle Joe was rushing over hill and dale in the general direction of Hartford, Conn., with the firecrackers cheering him on.

"Liberty, John, is the only real thing in this world for a nation, but just why the glorious cause of freedom should be slapped in the face with an imitation of the bombardment of Port Arthur is something which I must have misconstrued.

"We had a very quiet time here at home on the Fourth, John, with the exception that another interesting cousin of yours, my young namesake, Peter Grant, tied a giant firecracker to the cat's tail, and the cat went to the kitchen to have her explosion.

"It took two hours and seven neighbors to get your good old Aunt Maggie out of the refrigerator, which was the place selected for her by the catastrophe.

"The stove lost all the supper it contained; little Peter Grant lost two eyebrows and his Buster Brown hair;

the cat lost seven of its lives, and the glorious cause of freedom got a send-off that could be heard 19 miles.

"We all missed you, John, but maybe it is better you were not at home on the Fourth, because the doctor is occupying your room so that he can be near the wounded—otherwise, we are all well.

"I think, John, that when freedom was first invented by George Washington the idea was to make it something quiet and modest which he could keep about the house and which he could look at once in a while without getting nervous prostration.

"But George forgot to leave full instructions, and nowadays when the birthday of freedom rolls around the impulsive American public wakes up at daylight, shoves up the window and begins to hurl torpedoes at the house next door, because a noise in the air is worth two noises on the quiet.

"We had a very quiet Fourth at the exception of your second cousin, Hector, who patriotically attached himself to a hot-air balloon, and when last seen was hovering over Erie, Pa., and making signs for his parents not to wait supper for him.

"Most of our neighbors for miles in every direction have sons and daughters missing, but what could they expect when a child will try to put a pound of powder in four inches of nape and then light the result with a match?

"The Fourth is a great idea, but I think this is carrying it too far, as the little boy said when he went over the top of the house on the handle of a sky-rocket.

"We had a very quiet time at home on the Fourth, John, with the exception of our parlor, which took fire when your enthusiastic cousin, Randolph, tried to make some Japanese lanterns by setting fire to the lace curtains.

"The firemen put out the fire and most of our furniture.

"Your cousin was also much put out when I spanked him.

"We hope to recover from the excitement before the next Fourth, but your aunt hopes that somebody will soon invent a new style of noise which will not be so full of concussion. Yours with love, UNCLE PETER."

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CANNON CRACKERS

Let him go. It is a part of a boy's education.

It does seem to the small boy that he should have one day to spend unhampered by rules and regulations.

What does your boy care if you did only have one bunch of firecrackers for the entire Fourth when you were a boy? He knows that the world was slow and sleepy then anyway.

One reason why this country has a population of nearly 80,000,000 is that so many glorious Fourths have been rainy.

A Chinaman invented the firecracker, but it was some other fool who made the first toy pistol.

If there had been cannon crackers when George Washington was a little boy, this country might never have had a father.

As usual, we start in the day after determined to have a sane Fourth next time, and henceforth to use no other.

ALL FOR HOME, SWEET HOME.

With a Joker in the Pack.

Two Fourth of July Stories

By Gen. William R. Shafter.

Wholesome enthusiasm, whether fired by the battery of words or gunpowder, is bound to create courage and stir our brave men to greater deeds of valor. I feel that we cannot celebrate too much for the glorification of the greatest day in the history of our union. When I was a little boy I looked forward to the Fourth of July with all of the pleasurable anticipation of childhood, and saved my pennies from Christmas time to Independence day to buy the wherewithal for the fitting and noisy celebration.

I think, however, my most exciting Fourth was in the Cuban campaign of 1898. The morning after the Santiago battle an orderly brought me a paper containing original daggery in seven heroic verses. They were entitled: "Phat Gen. Shafter Wint After," and the first stanza began: "Now, when Gen. Toral, a Spanish dago, Met Gen. Shafter at Santiago, Sez Gen. Toral to Gen. Shafter, 'Be jabbers, old man, now phat are yez after?'" And Gen. Shafter sez: "Phat d'yez think?" And gave him the slyest sort of a wink— "I'll get phat I'm after," sez Gen. Shafter."

I think that the Fourth of 1898 was the only celebration I ever took part in that inspired the muse, for which I am grateful.

By Gen. Charles A. Woodruff.

What promised to be the dreariest Fourth of July in my life ended in being one of the most amusing. I was sent to the Indian country on Milk river, Montana, to deliver some annuities, and had to wait several weeks for the Indians to come in from their hunting expedition.

The Assiniboine Indians came straggling into camp one by one, and hung around my camp with undisguised curiosity. I had a headache, and took a quart bottle of ammonia from my medicine chest and sniffed at the cork. I knew how to mystify the Indians, and I did a couple of side steps, rolled my eyes, jerked my body, and pointed my finger to the cardinal points before taking the dose.



Took a Long Breath and Fell as One Dead.

The Indians were delighted at my pantomime of war medicine. I told them that whoever took that medicine could never be killed in war, but that I was afraid they would join forces with the Sioux and fight against me if I gave them that dose. I knew them to be the greatest foes of the Sioux, but of course I had to be coaxed into giving away my wonderful charm.

After much persuasion I finally agreed to do it, but bargained that it must not be taken in the presence of others. It was so powerful that no novice could take the white man's medicine with others watching him. Of course that made a hit with the Indians at once, and there were many volunteers to be number one.

I selected the chief. He walked into my tent, and I began my mysterious passes at him. In the meantime I had two quart bottles before me. One contained water and the other ammonia. I made him understand that at the end of my speech, when I clapped my hands, he was to take a deep breath and inhale the war medicine as soon as I removed the glass stopper. I don't believe a motion was lost on the Indian; they are good imitators. I gave three war whoops and made my extemporaneous speech.

Then I clapped my hands, pulled the cork, and thrust the ammonia under the chief's nose. He took a long, deep breath as directed, and fell backward as one dead.

When he revived there were tears rolling down his cheeks, and I expected to have no more fun that Fourth, but here I had not reckoned on the Indian's sense of humor.

That chief went out and was as dumb as an oyster about his treatment, and so close did they keep secret that every Indian in the camp came into that tent singly and to his war medicine without a murmur.

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